

REMARKS

Applicants thank the Examiner for total consideration given the present application. Claims 1 and 2-19 are pending of which claims 1, 8, and 15 are independent. Claims 1, 8, 11, and 15 have been amended through this Reply. Applicants respectfully request reconsideration of the rejected claims in light of the remarks presented herein, and earnestly seek timely allowance of all pending claims.

I. Interview Summary

Applicants thank the Examiner and her supervisor for granting a Personal Interview with the Applicants' representative on July 09, 2008. During the interview, Applicants' representative presented arguments and proposed claim language that would further clarify the claimed invention. The Examiner agreed to reconsider the application when a formal reply is filed.

II. Claim Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b)

Claims 1, 3-6, 8, 15 and 17-19 stand rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Yamamoto et al. (U.S. Patent 5,226,298). This rejection is respectfully traversed.

For a Section 102 rejection to be proper, the cited reference must teach or suggest each and every claimed element. *See M.P.E.P. 2131; M.P.E.P. 706.02.* Thus, if the cited reference fails to teach or suggest one or more elements, then the rejection is improper and must be withdrawn.

In this instance, Yamamoto fails to teach or suggest each and every claimed element. For example, amended independent claims 1, 8, and 15 recite, *inter alia*, "wherein passage lengths of the entry opening and the exit opening do not extend the full length of the cooling element such that the cooling air flowing in the openings is brought into direct contact with the adsorption element." *Emphasis added.*

As previously submitted, Yamamoto et al. teaches a thermoelectric air conditioner with absorbent heat exchanger surfaces. Yamamoto et al. teaches a flat thermoelectric device, the device having one surface as a heating surface and the other surface as a cooling surface; and flow passages respectively provided for two fluids and which are arranged to intersect with each other while holding the thermoelectric device therebetween (column 2, lines 9-16).

More specifically, Yamamoto et al. teaches an air conditioner which includes corrugated fins 12 and 13 provided on opposing sides of each of a plurality of corrugated thermoelectric devices 11.

The Examiner interprets the corrugated fins 12 and 13 as disclosing the claimed adsorption element and the plurality of corrugated thermoelectric devices 11 as disclosing the claimed cooling element. It is respectfully submitted that the Examiner's such interpretation is totally unfounded. Even if, *assuming arguendo*, Yamamoto's corrugated thermoelectric devices 11 include an entry opening and an exit opening, such entry and exit opening would include passage lengths extending the full length of the corrugated thermoelectric devices 11. Similarly, the passage lengths of the entry or exit openings of the corrugated fins 12 and 13 also extend the entire length of the fins. Further, the air passages created by the entry opening and exit openings of Yamamoto are not separated by an opening as claimed, instead, these passages are continuous and extend the entire length of the fins (12, 13) or the thermoelectric device (11).

Yamamoto is distinguished from the claimed invention in that in accordance with the dehumidification unit of the claimed invention, the cooling element is provided with an opening, being in the shape of a frame, and each of the second air ventilation passages is separated by the opening into an entry opening and an exit opening situated respectively on one passagewise side and on the opposite passagewise side thereof, and the passage length of each of the second air passages is a non-continuous passage which does not extend the full length of the cooling element. As a result, the pressure loss of the cooling air flowing therethrough is lowered by an amount corresponding to the reduction in passage length. Further, the flow rate of the cooling air flowing through the cooling element is increased by an amount corresponding to the reduction in pressure loss, and the heat-liberation action of heat of adsorption by the cooling air is

accelerated. In addition, because of the formation of the opening in the cooling element, the cooling air flowing in the opening is brought into direct contact with the adsorption element. For example, when compared with the case where the opening is not provided and the cooling air flowing through the second air ventilation passages is constantly brought into indirect contact with the adsorption element with a passage wall lying therebetween, the efficiency of heat transfer between the adsorption element and the cooling element is improved, and the heat-liberation action of heat of adsorption by the cooling air is accelerated correspondingly.

Therefore, for at least these reasons, independent claims 1, 8, and 15 are distinguishable from Yamamoto. Claims 3-6 and 17-19 are also distinguishable from Yamamoto at least by virtue of their dependency on corresponding independent claim.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request that the rejection of claims 1, 3-6, 8, 15 and 17-19, based on Yamamoto, be withdrawn.

III. Claims Rejections Under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a)

The Examiner has rejected claims 7, 9-12 and 16 under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Yamamoto et al. (U.S. Patent 5,226,298) in view of Iacolla (U.S. Patent 5,547,019). Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection.

Iacolla does not remedy the noted deficiencies of Yamamoto et al. Iacolla is only relied upon to teach dependent claim features. This reliance on Iacolla fails to make up for the deficiencies of Yamamoto et al. discussed above with respect to independent claims 1, 8 and 15. Therefore, the asserted combination of Yamamoto et al. and Iacolla (assuming these references may be combined, which Applicants do not admit) fails to establish *prima facie* obviousness of any pending claim.

Applicant submits that claims 7, 9-12 and 16 are allowable at least by virtue of their dependency on claims 1, 8 and 15. Accordingly, reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

Conclusion


All matters having been addressed in view of the foregoing, Applicants respectfully request the entry of this Amendment, the Examiner's reconsideration of this application, and the immediate allowance of all pending claims.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact Ali M. Imam, Reg. No. 58,755 at the telephone number of the undersigned below, to conduct an interview in an effort to expedite prosecution in connection with the present application.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 02-2448 for any additional fees required under 37.C.F.R. §§1.16 or 1.147; particularly, extension of time fees.

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Respectfully submitted,

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